

INFORMATION ITEM

Interagency Ecological Program Overview and Update

Summary: The Interagency Ecological Program (IEP) has been collecting, analyzing, and synthesizing environmental and ecological data from the San Francisco Estuary and within the Delta for more than 40 years. This briefing will orient the Council to the mission, organization, and operation of one of the cornerstones of the estuary's science monitoring enterprise.

Background

The IEP collects environmental and ecological data as part of its mandate to document the impacts of long-term operations of the state and federal water projects to resources within the San Francisco estuary.

The IEP consists of six federal and three State agencies bound by a memorandum of understanding to conduct and support collaborative science around water project impact monitoring. The Council, represented by the executive officer, has an ex-officio role as an independent science observer and arbiter. Delta Science Program staff supports the IEP Science Management Team and the IEP Coordinators Team. In addition, the Council supports and houses the IEP lead scientist.

With three levels of organization (including Agency Directors, Program Coordinators, and the Science Management Team), the IEP coordinates a program-wide budget of around \$30 million annually to assist with: 1) State Water Resources Control Board regulatory requirements for water quality; 2) state and federal water project compliance with endangered species laws; and, 3) scientific investigations to promote ecological understanding of the estuary. Reporting of monitoring findings occurs through a variety of reports and is a feature of the annual IEP Workshop held each spring.

The Interagency Ecological Program provides a foundation for building adaptive management institutions that will serve estuary monitoring science needs into the future.

Relevance to Council and Delta Plan

The information produced by the IEP seeks to inform managers on various aspects of the coequal goals: water supply reliability, the Delta ecosystem, and climate-associated variations in ecological performance of the estuary. While keeping its eye on the ecology of the estuary and the Delta as a whole, the IEP's data informs water resource management affecting the Delta and the State. Delta Science Program staff help support interagency activities in coordination with the IEP lead scientist and support stakeholder outreach efforts as part of routine IEP business practices.

Today's Briefing

The IEP Lead Scientist Dr. Steven Culberson will focus his presentation on the following topics:

1. What is the IEP?
2. What does the IEP do?
3. How does the IEP pursue its mission?
4. What is the relationship of the IEP to the Delta Stewardship Council and vice-versa?

Fiscal Information

Not applicable.

List of Attachments

None.

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